



December 2015

The Beacon

Nebraska Emergency Management Agency



Page

In this Issue

- 2 Assistant Director's Letter
- 3 Employee of the Year and Longevity Awards
- 4 Leadership Resources Award; Gen. Dahlman Awards
- 5 Food-related Incident Tabletop, Hazmat Safety Officer Course
- 6 Hostile-Action-Based Exercise Honors; National Conference
- 7 Annual Planning and Training and Exercise Workshops; Lancaster County THIRA
- 8 Staff Meeting Updates; Cooper Drill
- 9 Special Days, Weeks and Months in 2016 Calendar
- 10 Weather Ready Nation

Gov. Pete Ricketts Honors Tonya Ngotel as Military Department's Employee of the Year

See Story on Page 3



Leadership Resources Presents Success Award to NEMA PIO Jodie Fawl

See Story on Page 4



A Message from
NEMA Assistant Director

Bryan Tuma

We envision safer, less vulnerable communities in Nebraska made possible through effective collaborative partnerships committed to saving lives and reducing the impact of disasters.

Our mission is to coordinate, support and serve Nebraska through an effective and relevant emergency management agency.

THANK YOU — As 2015 comes to a close, I wish to express my appreciation to everyone who has contributed to the business of emergency management in Nebraska this year. I would like to recognize the efforts of local, state and federal partners as we work together to prepare for, respond to, recover from and mitigate against disasters here in our state.

A sincere thanks is especially due to local emergency managers who go above and beyond to meet the needs of their citizens. Not only do our local EMs work tirelessly in their own communities, but they step up to help during times of crisis, as well. For example, during this year's avian influenza outbreak, local directors worked together in support of their colleagues in northeast Nebraska, especially to complete credentialing. It worked extremely well, allowing for accurate reporting to the USDA and enhanced security at work sites.

I want to thank our state and local partners who step up whenever needed. As an agency of just 38 staff, we couldn't do our jobs without the support of other agencies. Thanks to our federal counterparts who have been here this year to support us as we work through DR4225. The Joint Field Office in Lincoln is still open and should remain so until February. Thanks also to the volunteer and faith-based organizations who actively assist us.

UPCOMING ISSUES — As we look ahead to 2016, we are focusing on a variety of issues and efforts that are of special notice for the emergency management community. At this year's National Association of Emergency Management annual meeting of state directors, the re-engineering of the public assistance program was a hot topic. FEMA is striving to test a better way of doing business and helping communities affected by a disaster recover faster.

Another national issue we are monitoring is proposed changes to the individual assistance program. Based on our review the changes, getting an individual assistance declaration will be more difficult in the future. With that in mind, building and maintaining relationships with volunteer and faith-based organizations that can respond following a disaster to help families recover becomes even more important in light of potential changes to this program.

In Nebraska, we are continuing our effort at community outreach. Helping elected officials to develop an understanding of what emergency management can and can't do is an important part of the work we do. We can help planning, exercise and training (PET) regions and local emergency management directors in this community outreach. Let us know and we can schedule a program near you.

HSGP REFORMAT — We are focussing our efforts at reformatting our Homeland Security Grant Program goals. Discovering an effective system to manage a finite resource against considerable demand is difficult, but of paramount importance. Moving forward, we need to look at how the process will be conducted. Issues of importance include:

- continued sustainment of investment justifications,
- improved stakeholder engagement, including various constituencies and subject matter experts, to review and recommend project proposals, and
- improved efficiency, clarity or refinement of the grant process.

We want to provide better guidance on eligible items and how project proposals should be structured; and we want to be more transparent on fiscal issues. We are working to empower the Senior Advisory Committee and the Homeland Security Policy Group in their roles to identify and prioritize grant-funded initiatives.

WINTER OUTLOOK — The first of this year's storms has already hit the state, and local and state emergency managers have had frequent updates from National Weather Service staff about upcoming ice, snow and wind events like the one that accompanied our Thanksgiving holiday. Please note the winter weather awareness information included later in this issue and make sure you are prepared to travel safely this winter.

HAPPY HOLIDAYS — I'd like to take this opportunity on behalf of all the staff at NEMA to wish you all a happy holiday season and a happy new year. Once again, I'd like to thank you for your contributions to supporting emergency management in Nebraska. Your efforts are appreciated.

Sincerely,

Nebraska Military Department Recognizes Staff

Tonya Ngotel, State Emergency Response Commission coordinator, was honored as employee of the year for the Nebraska Military Department in ceremonies at both the Nebraska State Capitol and Joint Force Headquarters on the Nebraska Air National Guard base.

Each year the department recognizes an employee and supervisor of the year. **Edward Raftery**, an airport firefighter crew chief for the Nebraska Air National Guard Fire Department was recognized as Supervisor of the Year for 2015.

In addition, Nebraska Emergency Management Agency (NEMA) staff were among Military Department staff recognized for years of service. They included: Sue Krogman, Dave Reisen, Brent Curtis, Michael Loftis, Phyllis McCown and Nikki Weber.



Tonya Ngotel was recognized as 2015 Employee of the Year by the Nebraska Military Department by, from left, Jon Schwarz, technical hazards section manager, Bryan Tuma, NEMA assistant director, Ngotel and Maj. Gen. Daryl Bohac, adjutant general for the Nebraska Military Department.



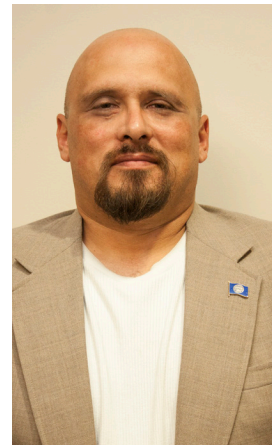
Sue Krogman, center, NEMA information technology and communications unit supervisor, was recognized for 30 year of service to the state by NEMA Assistant Director Bryan Tuma and Gov. Pete Ricketts.



Dave Reisen, center, NEMA training and exercise unit supervisor, was recognized for 30 year of service to the state by Assistant Director Bryan Tuma and Maj. Gen. Daryl Bohac.



Mary Baker, state hazard mitigation officer, was recognized by Brig. General Richard Dahlman for her work on the 2015 state Charitable Giving Campaign.



Program Specialist Brent Curtis was recognized for 15 years with the state.



Mike Loftis, radiological systems manager, was recognized by Jon Schwarz, technical hazards section manager and Maj. Gen. Daryl Bohac for 15 years with the state.



From left, Phyllis McCown, accountant, was recognized by Lt. Gov. Mike Foley, Assistant Director Bryan Tuma and Administrative Assistant III Cindy Newsham for 15 years with the state.



Nikki Weber, preparedness section manager, was recognized by Maj. Gen. Daryl Bohac and Assistant Director Bryan Tuma for 15 years with the state.



Leadership Resources CEO Boyd Ober presents a Success Award to NEMA's Jodie Fawl.



Brig. Gen. Richard Dahlman honored Jodie Fawl during an all-staff meeting at NEMA by presenting her with his challenge coin in recognition of her Success Award.

Leadership Resources Honors NEMA Public Information Officer *Brig. Gen. Dahlman Recognizes Effort*

Leadership Resources, a provider of strategic planning and organizational development services, recognized six individuals and two groups by presenting them with Success Awards at its 2015 Celebration of Success event on Tuesday, Dec. 8 at Embassy Suites in Lincoln.

Jodie Fawl, public information officer at NEMA, earned one of the Success Awards presented at the event.

There were 64 finalists for the award.

"These individuals and businesses committed themselves to following our development processes and we are honored to help them achieve their dreams," said Boyd Ober, president and CEO of Leadership Resources.

The nearly 250 leaders who attended this annual event had the opportunity to hear from Randy Slechta,

CEO of Leadership Management International and to attend speed leader discussions led by 20 individuals who shared key insights into their success.

Fawl participated in Leadership Resources' Effective Personal Productivity course and set and met, personal, leadership and organizational goals with the help of the tools she learned in the class.



Julie Mayers Presented with Coin from Deputy Adjutant General Richard Dahlman

Julie Mayers, grants unit supervisor, at NEMA was presented with a challenge coin from Brig. Gen. Richard Dahlman, who serves as deputy adjutant general of the Nebraska Military Department of which NEMA is a member.

Challenge coins are presented by unit commanders in recognition of special achievement by a member of the unit. Mayers was honored for her work planning activities for NEMA staff in addition to her regular duties. Mayers recognized **Molly Bargmann**, planning specialist in public assistance, for her support of those activities.



Food-related Incident Topic of Ag Dept Tabletop Exercise

Roger Conrad, exercise training officer with NEMA, served as facilitator at a Foul Fodder tabletop exercise in November. The Nebraska Department of Agriculture tabletop exercise provided participants with an overview of what happens at the local, state and federal levels during a food-related incident. The exercise focused on the role that key personnel play in containing a food chain contamination problem and protecting consumers. Information at the tabletop exercise was generated from discussions among participants as they went through a hypothetical scenario. The exercise included 40 representatives from federal and state agencies as well as representatives from the agricultural industry. Kate Speck from the University of Nebraska Lincoln Public Policy Center was also a facilitator.



Hazmat Safety Officer Course Offered at NEMA

A three-day safety officer course taught by Todd Skoglund, president of Signet North America, was offered at NEMA in November. In the demonstration at left, Skoglund illustrates how gas builds up under containment and most generally releases downward. Participants learned how to successfully perform as a safety officer at a hazmat incident.



NEMA Recognizes Participants in Hostile Action Based Exercise

Nebraska Emergency Management Agency (NEMA) Assistant Director **Bryan Tuma** honored members of the Washington County response community with commendations for their contributions during the hostile-action-Based (HAB) exercise at the Fort Calhoun Station in early August.

The commendations were presented at a Washington County Board of Supervisors meeting on Nov. 10.

Tuma began his presentation with a special thanks to everyone who planned and participated in the exercise noting that the ability to demonstrate “reasonable assurance” as required by FEMA and the NRC can only occur when all the response partners and stakeholders successfully achieve their missions.

Tuma offered a special thanks to **Bill Pook**, Region 5/6 emergency management director, for his contributions in planning the HAB exercise over an 18-month period.

Special commendations from NEMA were issued to **Sheriff Mike Robinson** and the **Washington County Sheriff’s Department** for their outstanding demonstration of command, control, communications and coordination capabilities with the Washington County Emergency Operations Center and the governor’s authorized representative from the incident command post. They were also recognized for incorporating the use of a new form that helped to define information that could be released from the Joint Information Center (JIC) without compromising the



From left: NEMA Assistant Director Bryan Tuma presents commendations from NEMA to Sheriff Mike Robinson and Capt. Phil Brazelton at a Washington County Board of Supervisors’ meeting. They were recognized for their work on a hostile-action-based exercise at Ft. Calhoun Nuclear Station.

law enforcement response.

Captain Phil Brazelton was given a special commendation for his service and support in preparing and coordinating multi-agency communication capabilities and specifically for ensuring the NEMA event/response radios were programmed and integrated into the local response network. His knowledge and efforts saved NEMA more than \$12,000 to make NEMA radios compatible and to integrate them into the system.

Dr. Mark Sand also received a special commendation for his technical expertise and proficiency in delivering radiological briefings to emergency workers at the staging area for the

exercise. Sand’s knowledge of dosimetry, potassium iodide, exposure limits and individual dose record forms was specifically recognized and received special acknowledgement by members of FEMA’s evaluation team.

Tuma expressed how important it was for NEMA to recognize the outstanding contributions that are being made by its partners and thanked those who received the special commendations, all the members of the Washington County response community, and the Washington County Board of Supervisors for the investment and commitments they make to ensure the health, safety and welfare of the citizens of Washington County.



The National Emergency Managers Association meeting in October in Miami highlighted many of the issues currently facing state directors. NEMA Assistant Director Bryan Tuma was among the participants.

Threats, Hazards, Risks Assessed at Annual State Workshop

NEMA hosted the 2015 Threat/Hazard Identification and Risk Assessment (THIRA) and State Preparedness Report (SPR) Workshop Oct. 21-22 in Lincoln at Southeast Community College.

Representatives from the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), Nebraska Emergency Management Agency (NEMA), the American Red Cross, several state agencies, local health departments and emergency managers from around the state were included in the meeting.

"The meeting was held to complete the THIRA and the SPR, which are required for the state to be eligible for homeland security grant funding through the U.S. Department of Homeland Security," said Logan Lueking, a program specialist with NEMA.

"We were glad to see all the involvement from multiple levels of government in the process."

The THIRA and SPR are part of an effort to determine the state's emergency management capabilities and level of preparedness. The information gathered will be compiled, along with information from the rest of the states, to determine the nation's level of preparedness as a whole. That national preparedness report will be presented to Congress next year.

Multi-year Training Plan Developed at Annual Workshop

The annual Training and Exercise Planning Workshop (TEPW) was held Oct. 22 and included participants representing the eight planning exercise and training regions and several state agencies.

The purpose of the TEPW is to develop a multi-year training and exercise plan for the state. The participants provided input into the priorities established by the Threat and Hazardous Identification Risk Assessment. They began laying out and de-conflicting a plan for exercises and training events across the state for the coming years.

Lincoln-Lancaster County Hosts First Threat, Hazard Identification, Risk Assessment

Lincoln-Lancaster County Emergency Management hosted its first Threat and Hazard Identification and Risk Assessment on Nov. 18 at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln's Memorial Stadium.

The THIRA is an important part of the overall disaster preparedness planning process.

According to **Jim Davidsaver**, director of Lincoln-Lancaster County Emergency Management, his agency had major assistance from Lincoln-Lancaster County GIS Department, Lincoln Fire and Rescue-Hazmat, UNL Athletics and UNL's Public Policy Center.

The Public Policy Center helped with the planning, provided facilitators for the small group discussions and assembled the data gathered during the workshop.

"We had 119 attendees from at least 57 different agencies," Davidsaver said. "Attendees included representatives from public safety, critical infrastructure, transportation, communication, military, healthcare, non-profit disaster response and health and human services."

Attendees were furnished with orientation information about the THIRA process before the workshop. The workshop addressed three 'worst case' scenarios (wide spread tornado, large scale flooding and a train derailment-hazardous material spill outside UNL's Memorial Stadium on a football Saturday) that could significantly impact Lancaster County.

"Attendees participated in six small group discussion sessions focused on the thirty-two core capabilities for community resiliency, preparedness, response and recovery," Davidsaver said. "Each small group 20-minute discussion focused on one of these core capabilities. Attendees self-selected which small groups they would participate in. A facilitator hosted each discussion and assembled the data. With five facilitators each hosting six discussion sessions, the workshop efficiently covered thirty of the core capabilities."

"We were very pleased with the turnout and active participation of the attendees. The workshop is just one step in the THIRA process. The data gathered allows us to identify our desired outcome for each core capability. The next step in the process is to begin identifying the resources needed to achieve these desired outcomes and working to that end."

Davidsaver said the workshop will lead to better plans, more effective plans and a more complete program. The THIRA was held as part of the Southeast PET Region's requirement to conduct a THIRA.

"We are in the process of evaluating the data gathered during the workshop, but we are very pleased with our community stakeholders' attendance and participation," Davidsaver said. "Moving forward, we plan to host another THIRA workshop when our planning process calls for it."

The Beacon — December
Staff Meeting Updates

Graduate Student Presents at NEMA

Left: Derek Bargmann, a graduate student from the University of Nebraska-Lincoln gave a presentation on his research into how well Nebraska's elected county officials understand their role in emergency management. His research found that there was a lack of understanding of pre-disaster roles and that emergency managers need to make the topic a priority.

Guard Restructuring Topic of General's Update

Right: Brig. General Richard Dahlman, updated agency staff on changes being made to the Nebraska Army National Guard. The restructuring will create new opportunities for roughly 1,100, soldiers in units in 16 Nebraska communities across the state.



NEMA Staff Participate in Cooper Station Drill in Auburn



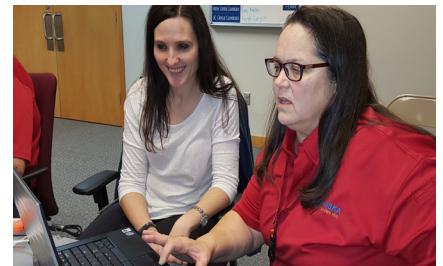
Mike Wight, public information officer with the Department of Health and Human Services, answers questions during a mock news conference at the Cooper drill Dec. 10 as plant technical briefer Linda DeWhirst (center) looks on and sign language interpreter Peggy Williams (left) of the Commission for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing signs.



NEMA Emergency Operations Facility staff (from left) Tonya Ngotel, Alisia LaMay, Jon Schwarz and Deb Robinson, work in the Emergency Operations Facility in Auburn. As governor's authorized representative (GAR), Schwarz made protective actions decisions based on the scenario.



Molly Bargmann of NEMA listens to a conference line in the Joint Information Center (JIC) at the Cooper off-site facility in Auburn. As communication specialist in the JIC, Bargmann gets information from the State Emergency Operations Center in Lincoln, the Emergency Operations Facility in Auburn and from local emergency operations centers in Nemaha and Otoe counties to the up-date public information officer.



Melissa Lindell, public information officer (PIO) at the Department of Health and Human Services, works with Jodie Fawl, NEMA PIO, on a news release.



Sean Runge of NEMA serves as public inquiry specialist during the drill. Questions about rumors were directed to him.

Special Days, Weeks and Months in 2016

The following list of awareness days associated with emergency management was compiled using information from the following web pages: [National Weather Service](#), [Federal Emergency Management Agency](#) and [National Safety Council](#). It doesn't include all the federal and state holidays. It is intended to aid emergency management directors and anyone else who promotes preparedness and other emergency management issues in Nebraska. Included at the end of each month are some of the social media hashtags that can be used to promote awareness. If you have additions to this list, send them to: jodie.fawl@nebraska.gov. The list will be updated and posted on the NEMA website at: [2016 Special Days, Weeks and Months](#).

January

1-31 Get Organized Month
National Radon Action Month
Resolve to be Ready Month
National Blood Donor Month
#Ready2016 #WinterPrep

February

1-29 Earthquake Awareness Month
Flood Safety Month
#FloodSafety, #IceJams

March

1-31 American Red Cross Month
20-26 National Flood Safety Awareness Week
21-25 Severe Weather Awareness Week
23 Statewide Tornado Drill
26-27 Hazardous Materials Awareness Days -- Nebraska Hazmat Symposium
#SWA #SpringSafety #FloodSafety; #NEHazmat #Tornadoes

April

1-30 Pet First Aid Awareness Month
6-8 Nebraska Association of Emergency Management Conference, Columbus
10-16 National Volunteer Week
29 Arbor Day
30 America's PrepareAthon
#PreparAthon

May

1-31 Military Appreciation Month
Preservation Month
1-7 Public Service Recognition Week
4 National Firefighters Day
7 National Wildfire Community Preparedness Day
14 National Animal Disaster Preparedness Day
15-21 National Police Week
15-21 National EMS Week
15-21 Public Works Week
21 Armed Forces Day
31 National Heat Awareness Day
#AnimalPrep #WildfirePrep #Heat

June

1-31 National Safety Month
June 1-July 4
National Fireworks Safety Month
19-25 National Lightning Safety Awareness Week
#summersafety #natsafetymonth #wx #thunderstorms #heat #lightning #wildfires #floods #drought

July

1-31 Bioterrorism/Disaster Education and Awareness Month
Heat and Drought Safety Month
2 Salvation Army Founders Day
#DroughtSafety #HeatSafety #SummerThunderstorms

August

1-31 National Water Quality Month
#HeatWave #WaterConservation #Drought

September

1-30 National Campus Safety Awareness Month
National Preparedness Month
"Don't Wait. Communicate"
■ www.ready.gov
■ www.ready.gov/individuals-access-functional-needs
11 National Day of Service and Remembrance
30 America's PrepareAthon
#NatlPrep #FallSafety #PrepareAthon

October

1-31 Church Safety and Security Month
National Animal Safety and Protection Month
Global Diversity Awareness Month
National Crime Prevention Month
National Cyber Security Awareness Month
9-15 National Fire Prevention Week
13 Great Shakeout
16-22 America's Safe Schools Week
#shakeout #earthquake #cybersecurity

November

1-30 National Critical Infrastructure Protection Month
2 Winter Weather Awareness Day
#WinterPrep

December

3 International Day of Persons with Disabilities
#WinterSafety, #WinterPrep, #HolidayPrep

General Hashtags

#Crisis
#incidentmanagement
#SMEM Social Media and Emergency Management
#EM Emergency Management
#FEMA Federal Emergency Management Agency
#Hazmat
#HSEM Homeland Security Emergency Management
#Incident
#preparedness
#SM Social Media
#SMEM Social Media & Emergency Management
#SMEMChat
Used during Friday tweetchats on Twitter between 11:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m. CST
#VOST Virtual Operations Support Teams
#WX Weather-Specific Tweets. Preceded by state initials (**#NEWX** = Nebraska Weather) for state specific information



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Governor Pete Ricketts

State Homeland Security Director

Lt. Governor Mike Foley

NEMA Director

Major General Daryl Bohac

Assistant Director

Bryan Tuma

NEMA is charged by Nebraska statute to reduce the vulnerabilities of the people and communities of Nebraska in terms of injury, loss of life and property damage resulting from natural, technological or man-made disasters and emergencies.

NEMA is responsible for coordinating the state response in any major emergency or disaster including the support of local governments as needed or requested, and coordinating assistance with the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and other federal partners.

The Beacon

The Beacon is published six times a year and includes emergency management news and activities from across the state. Please forward story ideas or photos for inclusion to:

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Are You Prepared for Severe Weather?

Winter storms, snow, windchill, frost, ice and extreme cold are a coast-to-coast threat in the United States.

How to stay safe in a winter storm is important and the National Weather Service (NWS), in its effort to promote a Weather-Ready Nation wants us all to be prepared.

If you know what to do before, during, and after a winter event, you can increase your chances of survival. Visit: <http://www.nws.noaa.gov/om/winter/index.shtml> and you will find information on winter alerts, science and hazards, as well as snow coverage maps and information describing the different types of winter storms as well as how to deal with extreme cold. In addition, a broad array of educational materials are available.

Know Your Risk

Check weather.gov before you leave home to make sure you're prepared for what the weather might bring.

Take Action

Learn about the hazards you may face in your area. Make a family communications plan. Assemble an emergency supplies kit for you home and car.

Be A Force of Nature

Inspire others to take action by showing your friends and family how you are prepared. Tweet or post about it or tell them in person.

For information on winter safety visit: http://www.nws.noaa.gov/com/weatherreadynation/winter_safety.html

Get to Know NOAA

The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's National Weather Service provides weather, water and climate data and forecasts and warnings to protect life and property. Its goal is a Weather-Ready Nation, one that is prepared for and responds to weather-dependent events.

NOAA's National Weather Service leads seasonal safety campaigns to prepare the public for seasonal weather hazards.

NOAA warns the public about severe weather through Wireless Emergency Alerts and NOAA Weather Radio.

NOAA's Storm Prediction Center issues fire weather outlooks to help local officials prepare for potential wildfires.

NOAA's Space Weather Prediction Center provides space weather forecasts, watches, warnings and alerts.

NOAA's Weather Prediction Center provides snow and ice forecasts from Sept. 15 through May 15.

NOAA's Climate Prediction Center monitors drought and El Niño conditions.

NOAA's National Hurricane Center issues Atlantic and Pacific Hurricane Outlooks as a general guide to the expected overall activity during hurricane season.

Safety and Health Information

The Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) provides resources for workplace preparedness and response to severe weather emergencies at <https://www.osha.gov/SLTC/emergencypreparedness/>.

Employers must ensure that workers involved in response and recovery are protected from potential safety and health hazards. OSHA also provides information and resources to assist in these efforts. Follow NWS on Twitter and Facebook for the latest news on weather preparedness.

Get Weather.gov on Mobile Phones

Bookmark mobile.weather.gov to make sure that you have the latest weather news and information on the go. Complete instructions are available at <http://www.nws.noaa.gov/com/weatherreadynation/mobilephone.html#VkIJxberRD8>

